

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SANAA 000442

SIPDIS

NOFORN

FOR AMBASSADORS/DCMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2012

TAGS: [KVPR](#) [CVIS](#) [ETTC](#) [EFIN](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [YM](#) [TERFIN](#)

SUBJECT: TERRORISM FINANCE: REQUEST FOR POST VIEWS ON
DESIGNATION OF AL-AQSA FOUNDATION

REF: SECSTATE 54754

Classified By: AMB: EJHULL BASED ON REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

1. (S/NF) Reftel's proposed designation, under E.O. 13224, of the Al-Aqsa Foundation branch in Yemen involves important U.S. interests in the global war on terrorism and potentially as well US-Yemeni cooperation in that war. From vantage of Embassy Sanaa, our highest priorities at the moment are: (a) building a strong bilateral USG-ROYG counter-terrorism structure to deal with remaining Al-Qa'ida HVTs in Yemen (ORCA has a specific proposal now pending with the PSO); (b) following up on the arrest of Al-Moayad and turning off illicit Al-Aqsa Foundation activities; and (c) maintaining a stable working relationship with the Yemeni government through the Iraq conflict. Following up on the arrest of Al-Moayad and turning off Al-Aqsa Foundation illicit activities in support of terrorism must be and can be done in a way that is compatible with our other immediate priorities.

2. (S/NF) Embassy Sanaa believes that if there were an immediate designation of Al-Aqsa Foundation in Yemen, the Yemeni government (and public) would have a strongly negative reaction. A public uproar would immediately ensue, highlighted by pro-Palestinian demonstrations orchestrated by the opposition Islaah party, senior leaders of which, including Al-Moayad, founded the local Al-Aqsa Foundation in the early 1990's. Islaah would attempt to make political hay alleging American anti-Islamic and anti-Palestinian policies, and the government and the president's GPC party would be thrown on the defensive over the "holy issue of Jerusalem" during the last month of campaigning before Yemen's parliamentary elections April 27. None of that would be in U.S. interests.

3. (S/NF) Our understanding is that the ROYG has kept an arm's length from Al-Aqsa Foundation activities. It is a legally registered NGO put up and maintained by Islaah. Designation of the Al-Aqsa Foundation may, eventually, and on a broader basis, be a sound step to take in our efforts against global terrorism. Immediate designation, in Yemen alone, would not be.

4. (S/NF) The now public affidavit in support of the arrest of Sheikh Mohammed Ali Hasan Al-Moayad provides considerable wealth of detail to corroborate his material support and resources to foreign terrorist organizations Al-Qaeda and Hamas. We need to prepare the ground so that the reaction by key ROYG officials to this information is one of understanding, recognition, and appreciation. For this purpose, Ambassador will shortly draw to the Foreign Minister's attention key facts about Sheikh Al-Moayad's activities inimical to U.S. and Yemeni government interests, drawn from the publicly released affidavit. Embassy Sanaa will not repeat not alert ROYG officials regarding possible USG steps to designate Al Aqsa Foundation. However, it is essential that we initiate discreet private contacts with senior Yemeni officials about the public evidence against Al-Moayad so that they do not misunderstand USG actions against Al-Moayad and draw conclusions inimical to our interests. It would be counter-productive for our efforts in this regard to also have to be fighting a public battle with the ROYG on Al-Aqsa designation.

5. (S/NF) (S/NF) Rather than immediate designation of the Al-Aqsa Foundation branch in Yemen, Embassy Sanaa proposes that relevant USG agencies -- diplomatic, law enforcement, and intelligence -- assemble more information in order to target more broadly Al-Aqsa Foundation offices not just in Yemen, but elsewhere in the Middle East, Europe, and wherever they are located.

HULL